

(19) World Intellectual Property  
Organization  
International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date  
7 April 2005 (07.04.2005)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number  
**WO 2005/032171 A1**

(51) International Patent Classification<sup>7</sup>: **H04Q 7/20,**  
H04L 12/28

(21) International Application Number:  
PCT/AU2004/001328

(22) International Filing Date:  
27 September 2004 (27.09.2004)

(25) Filing Language: English

(26) Publication Language: English

(30) Priority Data:  
2003905293 26 September 2003 (26.09.2003) AU

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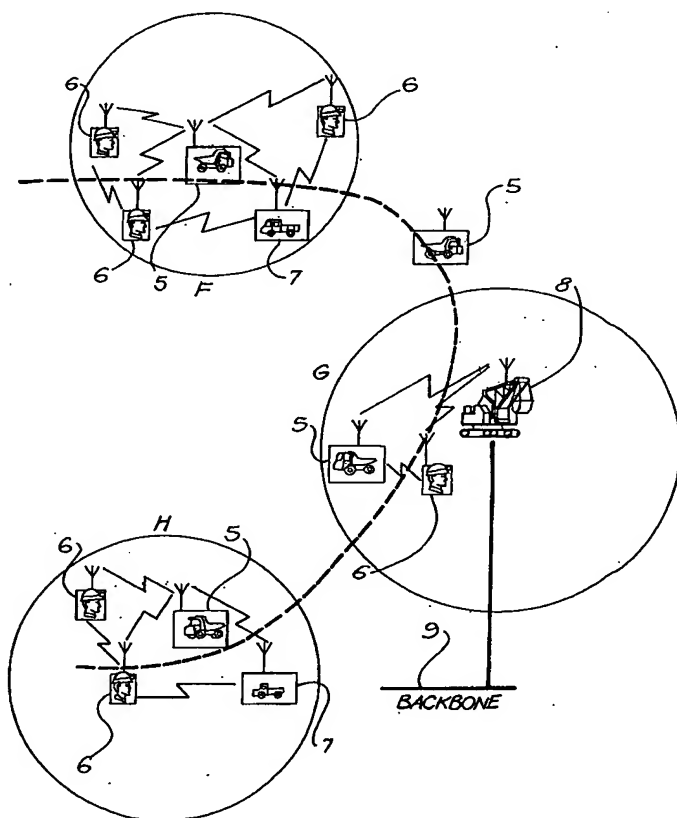
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(81) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every  
kind of national protection available): AE, AG, AL, AM,  
AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BW, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN,  
CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI,  
GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE,  
KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD,  
MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NA, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PG,  
PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SY, TJ, TM,

[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: **VIRTUAL NETWORK SYSTEM**



(57) Abstract: A virtual wireless computer network allows communication between a number of regions (F, G, H), which may be beyond normal wireless communication range, by carrying information between regions using mobile stations (5) which travel between regions. Each mobile station transmits and/or receives information by wireless communication to other stations within a region when it is in that region, to update both the stations in that region and the mobile station. One region may include a fixed station (8) hardwired into a backbone network (9). The network has particular application in a mining situation where the mobile stations may be haul trucks (5) carrying information between people (6) and light vehicles (7), with the fixed station at a crusher or shovel (8).

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TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, YU, ZA, ZM, ZW.

- (84) **Designated States** (*unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of regional protection available*): ARIPO (BW, GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, NA, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, HU, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

**Declaration under Rule 4.17:**

— *of inventorship (Rule 4.17(iv)) for US only*

**Published:**

— *with international search report*

*For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.*